

REMARKS

These remarks are responsive to the Office Action of March 28, 2006. Claims 37-43 and 45 are pending in this application. Claim 37 has been amended. New claim 46 has been added, reintroducing the subject matter of canceled claim 44. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested. Each of the Examiner's rejections is addressed below.

Applicant initially notes that the statutory period for replying to the non-final Office Action mailed on January 24, 2006 has been re-started to begin from March 28, 2006, to reflect a 3 month Suspension of Action, as noted in the Interview Summary mailed on June 21, 2006.

Section 103

Claims 37-42 and 45

Claims 37-42 and 45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 3,196,299 to Kott ("Kott") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,651,158 to Halm ("Halm"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Kott and Halm fails to disclose or make obvious a toothbrush having a plurality of channels extending transversely across a surface of a cleaning head from which cleaning/treating elements extend and separating a support structure from one of an adjacent support structure, a free end of the cleaning head, or the first end of the cleaning head, as required by independent claim 37.

Neither Kott nor Halm has the required transversely extending channels. The surface of the head of Kott from which its cleaning/treating elements extend is completely planar. In Halm, as seen in Figs. 4C and 4D, the "third" cleaning/treating elements 46 each extend from bridging portions 45, which are coplanar and do not have the required channels.

Accordingly, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 37-43 and 45

Claims 37-43 and 45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Kott in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,553,604 to Braun ("Braun"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Kott and Braun fails to disclose or make obvious a toothbrush having a plurality of channels extending transversely across a surface of a cleaning head from which cleaning/treating elements extend and separating a support structure from one of an adjacent support structure, a free end of the cleaning head, or the first end of the cleaning head, as required by independent claim 37.

Neither Kott nor Braun has the required transversely extending channels. The surface of the head of Kott from which its cleaning/treating elements extend is completely planar. In

Braun, there are no transversely extending channels; sockets 20 merely surround the base of elements 16.

Accordingly, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 43

Claim 43 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Kott in view of Halm and Braun. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

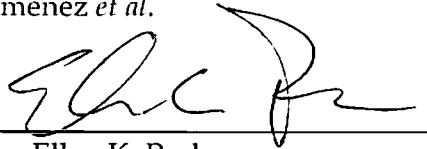
As noted above, none of Kott, Halm or Braun discloses the required transversely extending channels. Accordingly, the rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Pending claims 37-43, 45, and 46 are believed to be in form for allowance, and an indication to that effect is respectfully requested at this time. If any fees are required or if an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to debit or credit our Deposit Account No. 03-2455.

Respectfully submitted,

Jimenez *et al.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EKP', is written over a horizontal line.

DATE: September 25, 2006

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EKP/dlh

Enclosure